



Smart Growth concepts create quality places to live, work and relax.

Smart Growth refers to the way we once built our communities, whether rural or urban. It's about a return to a way of creating communities in which we can walk our children to school or travel to lively downtowns for shopping and dining. Using the basic principles of Smart Growth in our planning efforts allows us to build safer, more convenient and attractive communities for everyone, while preserving of our rural landscapes or historic structures.

Communities that utilize Smart Growth principles provide residents with a number of options for shopping, dining, or recreation all within walking or biking distance of one another. These principals also protect our historic areas and rural landscapes from diminishing character, encroachment by dense subdivisions, impaired services or outright destruction.

Smart Growth Principles

Mix Land Uses. New, clustered development works best if it includes a mix of stores, jobs and homes. Single-use districts make life less convenient and require more driving.

Take Advantage of Existing Community Assets. From local parks to neighborhood schools, public investments should focus on getting the most out of what we've already built.

Create a Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices. Communities should offer a range of options: houses, condominiums, and affordable homes for low income families.

Foster "Walkable," Close-Knit Neighborhoods. A compact, walkable neighborhood, that offers places to visit, contributes to peoples' sense of community because neighbors get to know each other, not just each other's cars.

Promote Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place, Including the Rehabilitation and Use of Historic Buildings. In every community, there are things that make each place special, from historic buildings to local businesses. These should be protected and celebrated.

Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty, and Critical Environmental Areas. People want to stay connected to nature and are willing to take action to protect farms, waterways, ecosystems and wildlife.

Strengthen and Encourage Growth in Existing Communities. Before we plow up more forests and farms, we should look for opportunities to grow in already built-up areas.

Provide a Variety of Transportation Choices. People can't get out of their cars unless we provide them with another way to get where they're going. More communities need safe and reliable public transportation, sidewalks and bike paths.

Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair, and Cost-Effective. Builders wishing to implement smart growth should face no more obstacles than those contributing to sprawl. In fact, communities may choose to provide incentives for smarter development.

Encourage Citizen and Stakeholder Participation in Development Decisions. Plans developed without strong citizen involvement don't have staying power. The most successful plan is one that is created and supported by the community.

Source: Smart Growth America

